OBSERVATIONS

BY THE

MANAGERS

OF THE

NEW TOWN DISPENSARY,

ON THE

REPORT

TO THE QUARTERLY MEETING OF MANAGERS OF THE PURLIC DISPENSARY, 7TH AUGUST 1817.

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Edinburgh, 25th August 1817.

At a Quarterly Meeting of the New Town Dispensary, held this day:

MANAGERS PRESENT:

THOMAS THOMSON, Esq. in the Chair:

Rev. D. Dickson, junior	George Ross, Esq.
Rev. Archibald Alison	John Wood, Esq.
Rev. R. Morehead	Walter Cook, Esq.
Bishop Cameron	T. Guthrie Wright, Esq.
Convener Miller	George Lyon, Esq.
William Trotter, Esq.	T. Blackwood, Esq.
John Manderston, Esq.	George Wilson, Esq.
Dr William Wright	James Swan, Esq. Secretary:

MEDICAL OFFICERS PRESENT:

Dr John Thomson	Dr J. W. Turner
Dr W. P. Alison	Dr D. M'Lagan
Dr B. Bartlet Buchanan	Dr James Murdoch:

The Secretary having reminded the Managers, that at last Meeting the Reverend D. Dickson, the Reverend Andrew Thomson, Mr Lyon, and Mr Wood, had been appointed a Committee to draw up and submit to the present meeting such observations on "the Report to "the Quarterly Meeting of Managers of the Public "Dispensary, 7th August 1817," as should appear to

them necessary to be laid before the public, Mr Wood, the Convener of that Committee, presented the observations prepared by them; which having been read,

It was moved by Mr Ross, that these observations be approved of and ordered to be printed and circulated, which motion having been seconded by Convener Miller, was unanimously carried; and a remit was made to the former Committee to take charge of the printing and distribution.

Mr Dickson then moved that the thanks of the meeting be given to the Convener of the Committee, for the able and satisfactory manner in which he had drawn up the observations; which motion having been seconded by Mr Cook, was unanimously agreed to.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

It is with feelings of the deepest regret, that the Managers of the New Town Dispensary find themselves under the necessity of again appearing before the public. They have ever been most anxious that the merits of the institution under their management should be judged of by its effects, of which it was their intention merely to lay a plain statement annually before the subscribers, at the period of their general meeting. They feel also peculiar reluctance at having any thing like the appearance of a controversy with the managers of another institution, whose benevolent object is the same with their own—to whose funds many of themselves are at this moment subscribers—to whose exertions they have all uniformly paid a ready tribute of applause,—and with whom they have ever been, and still are, most desirous to continue on an amicable footing. They feel, however, at the same time, that they would be deficient in the duty which they owe to themselves and to the institution intrusted to their care, were they to pass over in silence certain statements contained in a recent Report, directed

by the Managers of the Public Dispensary to be "sent to "each of the subscribers to both Dispensaries." By such silence, they might justly be held to acquiesce in the correctness of observations, which attribute to them, as they conceive, the most illiberal views, and represent their institution, instead of being beneficial, as on the contrary, one "productive of many evils." To obviate so injurious a representation, they feel themselves called upon to submit the following Statement to the consideration of the public.

The number of poor patients who flocked from all parts of the city and suburbs, to avail themselves of the benefits of the New Town Dispensary, far exceeded the expectation of its founders. Within eighteen months from the period of its commencement, it had given relief to no fewer than 8062 persons. It was not, therefore, at all surprising, that its medical officers should have represented, that "when the number of patients who "attend at the Dispensary is considered—the attention "necessary to be given to each case—the quantity of pre-"scriptions to be written and prepared—the number re-"quiring to be visited at their own houses—and the ex-"tent of town over which these patients are spread,—it "must at once appear evident, that these duties cannot "be performed without much exertion on the part of "the medical officers, and a consumption of their time "almost incompatible with any other employment."

The Managers were deeply impressed with the justice of this representation; and the only question, therefore, with them, was with regard to the best mode in

which the labours of the medical officers might be alleviated, with as little detriment as possible to the public. For this purpose two expedients occurred—either to enlarge their own establishment, by assuming an additional number of medical men, and establishing a branch of their institution in the Old Town; or else to enter into an arrangement with the other institution, for a division of the town between the two Dispensaries, for the purpose of visiting the sick poor. The latter of these seemed to them the preferable expedient: it could not only be accomplished with less expence to the public, but had also other advantages to recommend it. The opening a branch of their institution in the Old Town might possibly, as they conceived, give some offence to the other establishment, a circumstance which they have on all occasions been desirous, as much as possible, to avoid; while, on the other hand, they were clearly of opinion that the arrangement proposed, without destroying an honourable emulation (the advantages of which in this, as in every other department of usefulness, have already been so fully experienced), would produce a system of co-operation tending greatly to the mutual accommodation of both institutions, and rendering each far more beneficial to the public.

They therefore authorised Mr Trotter, who is in the direction of both institutions, to communicate to the Managers of the Public Dispensary their sentiments upon this subject. He embraced, accordingly, what he considered to be a very favourable opportunity for this purpose, at a meeting of the Managers of that institution, called for the express object of making a division of the town into districts to be allotted to their own medical

officers. At that meeting "Mr Trotter, as authorised "by the Managers of the New Town Dispensary, stated "their anxious wish to co-operate with the Managers of "the Public Dispensary, in any plan of *dividing the* "*town and suburbs* which might be mutually approved "of, as likely to increase the usefulness of both institu- "tions. He therefore moved, that a committee be ap- "pointed to hold a conference with the Managers of the "New Town Dispensary, in order to consider by what "means or plan of co-operation the benefits of both in- "stitutions may be most effectually and advantageously "dispensed to the public." The meeting considered the motion out of place, and postponing the consideration of it to a future occasion, *forthwith* proceeded to allot the whole town to their own medical officers. At the next quarterly meeting, however, of that institution, which Mr Trotter, in consequence of absence from town, was prevented from attending, it appears that a motion was made by Dr Duncan senior, and approved of, "That, in compliance with Mr Trotter's "motion, a committee of the Managers of the Public "Dispensary," consisting of the gentlemen whose names appear at their printed Report, "be appointed to meet "with a similar committee of Managers from the New "Town Dispensary, to consider in what manner the ef- "forts of the medical practitioners attached to both may "be most advantageously *united*, for affording relief to "those who have at once to struggle with poverty and "disease."

The result of the conference which ensued is already before the public. The committee of Managers of the New Town Dispensary reported it as their opinion, that

the object in view would be most beneficially promoted by a division of the town between the two institutions, "and that it was by no means expedient that they should "be blended and incorporated into one establishment:" which Report received the unanimous approbation of the ordinary Managers of that institution, at a *pro re natâ* meeting held on the 17th day of June last. The other committee, on the contrary, reported it as their opinion, that any arrangement for a division of the town was "altogether inadmissible" on their part, unless accompanied with a total union of the two establishments; which Report was approved of by a majority of the Managers of the Public Dispensary, at their quarterly meeting on the 7th of August. The nature, however, and tone of that Report, called forth a strong dissent from some of the Managers present on this occasion, who "conceived, that whatever might be the opinion of a "majority of the Directors of the Public Dispensary "with regard to the proposition submitted to them by "the other institution, the language of the Report was "improper, conveying insinuations that were, in their "opinion, unfounded; and that the facts stated in it did "not accord with their knowledge, as they were not "aware of any pernicious consequences that had arisen "from the new establishment, but, on the contrary, "good ones to the public—the attendance given at the "patients' houses, and the institution of several new "branches by the Public Dispensary*."

In that Report the Managers of the New Town Dis-

* Reasons of dissent transmitted by these gentlemen for insertion in the report of the other Dispensary, but which were stated to have arrived too late for that purpose.

pensary are represented as having totally rejected a "can-
"did and liberal plan of union," substituting in its place
"a proposal altogether inadmissible," and apparently
involving in itself "a gross absurdity;" one which would
have the effect of continuing a system attended with
"many pernicious and disagreeable consequences;" one
which "would evidently be a material step towards the
"accomplishment of what seems to have been a favour-
"ite object with the projector of the New Dispensary
"from its commencement, the conversion of the Public
"Dispensary into the Old Town Dispensary alone," and
as accompanying their proposal with "*insinuations* and
"conditions which do not carry that spirit of concilia-
"tion and justice which the Public Dispensary had a
"right to expect."

How far these representations are well founded, the public will be better able to judge, when they have had an opportunity of considering the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the two plans here brought into competition. And,

I. With regard to the plan for uniting and incorporating the two establishments. This proposal appeared to the Managers of the New Town Dispensary to be attended with manifest disadvantages. It seemed, in the first place, to be destructive of that highly useful spirit of emulation, the benefits of which had been held forth to the public in the original "Statement" of the founders of their institution, and had been since so amply confirmed by experience. It is obviously, in a great measure, owing to the existence of these two separate and

independent establishments, that the sick poor of this city and suburbs are at this moment placed in a situation so superior to that of any former period. A far greater number of the inhabitants are now interested in the object of such institutions, and annually contribute to their support; a far greater number of individuals, labouring at once under disease and poverty, are annually relieved; and far greater accommodation is afforded to them in the mode of procuring that relief. Not only has the new institution been established upon a much improved plan, but also, since its establishment, the Managers of the Public Dispensary, as might naturally be expected, have been induced to adopt some of its most material improvements. The original object of their institution has been so far changed, that, instead of leading the poor merely to expect from that charity the alleviation of those complaints which do not require confinement within doors, they too have recently made an arrangement, for the purpose of visiting at their own houses all those patients who require this mode of attendance. They have also, since the establishment of the New Town Dispensary, been induced to open branches of their institution in various districts. In consequence of their increased exertions, the number of patients relieved at that institution, in the course of last year, were 1000 more than in any former year; while, during the same period, no fewer than 6728 received relief, of one description or another, at the New Town Dispensary. Highly as the Managers of the new institution value the services of their medical officers (and they cannot, in truth, be too highly valued), they are at the same time fully satisfied, that the same advantages never could have re-

sulted from these gentlemen merely uniting their exertions with those belonging to the old establishment. They, on the contrary, sincerely believe, that if the New Dispensary had not existed as a separate and distinct establishment, the benefits already mentioned would have been in a great measure lost to the public. Deeply impressed with this conviction, they were unwilling to give their sanction to a measure by which, without the prospect of any adequate advantage, all the benefit arising from the independent existence of the two establishments would be entirely sacrificed, and a serious obstacle thus be thrown in the way of their future improvement.

But, in the *second* place, the Plan of Union, submitted to the Managers of the New Town Dispensary, afforded them no sufficient security, either for the adoption or continuance of those peculiar advantages which they considered their own institution at present to possess, and to which in no small degree they were induced to ascribe the unprecedented usefulness and success which, beyond all dispute, had attended their exertions. Of this description were those regulations by which their Dispensary is open every day in the week—their medical officers give a permanent attendance, instead of one only by rotation at remote intervals,—lying-in women are waited upon at their own homes,—the duties of manager and of medical officer are kept perfectly distinct, &c. By the proposed plan the union was immediately to take place, while every matter of detail was left open to subsequent arrangement, according to a plan to be prepared by the medical gentlemen of both institutions, of whom those belonging to the New Town Dispensary would form an extremely small pro-

portion. Its managers had some reason to apprehend, that matters which they regarded as of fundamental importance might elsewhere be viewed in a very different light. Nor were their apprehensions entirely imaginary. One of these regulations (that of having the Dispensary open every day in the week) is, in the recent Report of the Managers of the Public Dispensary, treated as unnecessary and superfluous; while another (the midwifery department) is actually represented as "productive of "many evils." The public will judge how far in such circumstances the guardians of an institution, which, in the course of two years from its commencement, has given relief to no fewer than 12,185 individuals, would have been justified in acceding to a proposal by which they were called upon to sacrifice at once the name and the independence of their own establishment, without, at the same time, having any sufficient security for the continuance of those advantages which had rendered it so beneficial.

To weigh against these strong objections to the proposed plan of incorporating the two institutions, the only argument which has been adduced in support of such a proposal is, "that many pernicious and disagree- "able consequences which must of necessity result, and "which indeed have already, to a very considerable de- "gree, resulted from the establishment of two rival "Dispensaries at Edinburgh, would in future be effec- "tually prevented." Of these "many pernicious and "disagreeable consequences" *one* only has been mentioned, and that as a specimen of all the rest *(ab uno disce omnia:)* "such as patients running from one Dispen- "sary to another, and taking medicines from both at

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"the same time." Such an objection as this however seems scarcely to require any serious answer. For it must be perfectly obvious, that if this *running* of patients from one Dispensary to another be an evil, it is one by no means likely to be of frequent occurrence, and if it *were*, the present system of the Public Dispensary itself is liable to precisely the same objection; for it is just as likely, and accordingly has as frequently happened, that patients should run from one branch of the same institution to another, as that they should run to different Dispensaries. It is hardly possible to suppose that such a consideration can have weighed much with the Managers of the Public Dispensary; and it is therefore to be regretted, that if there be indeed "many evils," which can alone be remedied by a complete union of the two institutions, these have not been more distinctly pointed out; and that the one held up as "the head "and front of the offending," is in itself of so perfectly insignificant a nature.

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II. With regard to the plan for dividing the town between the two institutions, the Managers of the Public Dispensary have stated, in the *first* place, that such a proposal is "altogether inadmissible."—"For we conceive," say they, "that any division of the town into dis-"tricts, with any other Dispensary, would be a breach "of faith on the part of the Public Dispensary, with all "those gentlemen who, by their benefactions to that in-"stitution, have become governors for life; and that it "would be a violation of a sacred obligation which the "Managers of the Public Dispensary have come under "to the dead, who have left legacies to that institution

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" for the relief of the sick poor, not in particular dis-
" tricts, but in every quarter of the town." Far be it from the Managers of the New Dispensary to call upon their brethren of the other institution either to be guilty of " a breach of faith " to the living, or to violate any " sacred obligation which they have come under to the " dead ;" but they must fairly own they cannot possibly bring themselves to view this objection in so very grave and serious a light, or to consider it so " insuperable," as it has appeared to the gentlemen of the other institution. If indeed these gentlemen had been called upon to accede to any arrangement, not calculated for the benefit of the objects committed to their charge, then doubtless they would have been bound by this consideration alone, to withhold their sanction from any measure of that description, even though there had been no " Governors for life," nor any contributors among the dead. But if, on the contrary, the proposed arrangement was one which would have rendered the services of each institution more beneficial to the public, and have thus promoted the general advantage of the whole sick poor of the city and suburbs, it is difficult to conceive any contract, either with the living or with the dead, by which they could have been precluded from accomplishing so desirable an object,—the only legitimate object indeed of their institution. Any argument to the contrary would prove a great deal too much. It would be a total bar to all improvement on the part of the institution, which, whatever be the change of circumstances, must for ever remain such, and no other than it was at the period of this alleged contract. A Life Governor, or a testamentary benefactor, would thus become the most

dangerous enemy of such an institution. Happily however such a consideration has not deterred the Managers of the Public Dispensary from making those other improvements which, with so much credit to themselves, they have recently introduced into their establishment. They have now placed upon a regular footing the visiting of the sick poor at their own houses, though it is by no means unlikely that among their Life Governors, or their deceased contributors, there may have been some who, in their partiality for the system of hospitals, have thought that such mode of attendance would be injurious to that system. They have also opened branches of their institution in various quarters of the town, though some benefactor dead or alive may have imagined that such an arrangement would lead to "pernicious and "disagreeable consequences, such as patients running "from one Dispensary to another, and taking medi-"cines" at them all. Nay more, they have even announced their resolution to take steps for obtaining a royal charter, though some such benefactor may have considered this as not a due application of funds destined by him exclusively for the relief of poverty and disease.

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But it is further said, that "to these *insuperable* "objections it might also be added, that it is impossible to "form *any* division of the town, which although it "might be highly beneficial to the New Dispensary, "would not diminish both the usefulness and the funds "of the Public Dispensary." The Managers of the New Town Dispensary are quite at a loss to discover any ground for this opinion. They can see no good reason why it should be "impossible" for these two in-

stitutions, both of which have at this moment the charge of the sick poor of the whole city and suburbs, " to " form *any* division of the town," which would not be liable to the objection of benefiting one exclusively at the expence of the other. On the contrary, they conceive that such an arrangement would equally and materially promote the usefulness of both institutions; and that any thing which contributes to their usefulness would naturally have likewise the effect of augmenting their funds; while, at the same time, less expence would thus be incurred, than by both institutions continuing to take charge of the whole town as at present. And they trust it is unnecessary for them to declare, that it was from such conviction alone they were induced to make the proposal to the other Dispensary. The idea of promoting the benefit of their own institution at the expence of any other, never once entered into their contemplation.

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Again it is stated as appearing to be " *a gross ab-* " *surdity* that patients, without regard to their place of " residence, may resort to either Dispensary which they " may prefer, but that when the state of their disease " requires confinement, they are to be debarred from be- " ing visited by the practitioner who prescribed for " them, unless they reside in a particular situation." But if there be any thing in this objection at all, it is an objection which applies equally to their own institution as it exists at the present moment. Patients from all quarters of the town resort to the Dispensary at Richmond-street, where the whole medical men do duty by rotation; but an arrangement has been made, by which particular districts are allotted to each, for the purpose of visiting patients at their own houses. Under such an

arrangement, it is obvious that it must frequently happen in that institution, where its medical officers are so extremely numerous, that when the state of a patient's disease requires confinement, he will be attended by a different practitioner from the one, or more than one, who prescribed for him at the Dispensary. The idea, however, that any medical gentleman, whether belonging to either Dispensary or not, is to be "debarred" from visiting any poor man who wishes his attendance, is in either case entirely out of the question. All that is meant by such an arrangement is to afford accommodation to the medical men, by a due division of labour; and that they shall not be compelled in the ordinary discharge of their Dispensary duties to visit beyond the particular bounds allotted to them.

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It is further alleged, that "*insinuations* and conditions are attached to the proposal from the New Dispensary, which do not carry that spirit of conciliation and of justice which the Public Dispensary had a right to expect." What is here meant by "insinuations" the Managers are utterly at a loss to conceive. They on the contrary submit to the public, whether in every respect their conduct has not been most fair, open, and explicit. They can also, at the same time, with the most perfect sincerity, declare, that in drawing up that Report, it was their most earnest wish to express themselves in terms not only free from all offence, but as conciliatory as possible towards the Managers of the other institution. So far from having any desire to avoid doing them "justice," they eagerly embraced that, as they had done every other opportunity, to pay that heartfelt tribute of applause to which these gentlemen are so well entitled for their "meritorious exertions" and services to

the public. For the truth of these observations they need only refer to the document itself, on perusing which, they are confident the public will readily acquit them of a charge which has been most painful to their feelings.

That there were "conditions" attached to their proposal (as there must ever be conditions in every arrangement between two contracting parties), they are, on the other hand, free to acknowledge. But they are sure that they will carry the opinion of the public along with them, when they assert that there is not one of these conditions which has not for its object exclusively the benefit of the poor. And when it is further considered, that, by the proposed arrangement, they were to give up the care of a great proportion of that class of the community at present committed to their charge, it was obviously incumbent upon them to secure to these the advantages which they had hitherto enjoyed. Surely if the Managers of the Public Dispensary, from similar views, did not consider themselves warranted in acceding to such an arrangement at all, *they* at least must, upon reflection, duly appreciate the motives which, upon this occasion, guided the conduct of the Managers of the new institution.

These conditions were, 1. The regular attendance upon patients in their own houses when necessary. 2. That the Dispensaries of each institution be open every day in the week: And 3. The continuance of the accoucheur department.

1. With regard to the first of these conditions, this was one to which it was now impossible for the Managers

of the Public Dispensary to have any objection, as they themselves had "lately enacted rules" for that purpose. But there is no little difficulty in understanding one observation of theirs upon this point, in which, after stating the nature of these rules, they observe, "Your "Committee cannot possibly discover what benefit the "sick poor would derive from being deprived of this "assistance in any part of the town." For it must be perfectly plain, that so far from *depriving* the poor of this assistance, the sole object of the stipulation made by the new institution was to *secure* to them this mode of relief, and to afford to the medical practitioners in each district more leisure for the discharge of this important duty.

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But it is said that the proposed plan "would evi-"dently be a material step towards the accomplishment "of what seems to have been a favourite object with the "projector of the New Dispensary from its commence-"ment, the conversion of the Public Dispensary into "the Old Town Dispensary alone. The consequences" they add, "which would result from the accomplish-"ment of this object, are too obvious to require notice." It does appear strange that the Managers of the Public Dispensary should have so widely mistaken the nature of the plan submitted to them, and should, in consequence of so unaccountable a mistake, have been led to regard a measure intended merely for the public benefit, as a "material step" towards the accomplishment of an illiberal but "favourite object." Whoever will take the trouble to peruse that plan of division, will at once perceive, that so far from having in view to convert the Public Dispensary "into an Old Town Dispen-

"sary alone," a great part of the *New Town*, comprehending the whole of that quarter from Hanover-street westwards has, in order to obviate this very objection, been expressly allotted to that Dispensary. And, besides, if *this* plan was not satisfactory, let it be remembered that the New Town Committee, in their report, expressly "beg that it may be distinctly understood that they "will, with the greatest pleasure, listen to any other plan "of the kind which may be suggested as better calcu-"lated to promote the object in view." With regard to the views attributed to "the projector of the new Dis-"pensary," its Managers conceive that by far the best contradiction which they can give to so groundless an allegation, is to state that this very plan, by which the other institution was to be put into the exclusive possession of so large a portion of the New Town, proceeded from *him*. In justice, however, to that eminent and respectable individual who has thus been personally alluded to, they feel themselves at the same time called upon to state that they have, on all occasions, witnessed in him the most liberal spirit towards the other institution; and they can have no doubt that any opposition with which he has had to contend, will hereafter be viewed in the same light with that which the venerable and distinguished founder of the Public Dispensary had to encounter at the time of its institution.

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2. With regard to the condition that the Dispensaries of each institution should be open every day in the week, it is observed, "Medical aid by means of the practi-"tioners at their own homes, and of a careful apothe-"cary, whose shop is always open for the supply of

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"medicines, may justly be said to have been afforded "to the patients of the Public Dispensary, *not only* "*every day of the week, but even every hour of the day,* "*ever since that charitable establishment was founded.*" The Managers, however, trust they will be pardoned in avowing that they have found nothing in the foregoing statement to induce them, in the slightest degree, to alter their former opinion as to the infinite importance of daily attendance at the Dispensary. And if it be undoubted that the poor themselves must be the best judges of the facilities afforded to them, their opinion has been pretty strongly evinced by the striking circumstance of the vast disproportion between the numbers who resort to each institution for relief.

3. It is with a mingled emotion of astonishment and regret, the Managers of the New Town Dispensary have perused that part of the Report of the other institution, which relates to the accoucheur department. "With regard," say they, "to midwifery, we confi- "dently hope that the Managers of the Public Dis- "pensary will never give any countenance to a plan "which must injure a highly interesting charitable in- "stitution already established in Edinburgh, and which "is a most useful appendage to the University; *and we* "*are assured, from unquestionable authority, that this* "*branch of the New Dispensary has already been pro-* "*ductive of* MANY EVILS"!! Now, with regard to the Lying-in Hospital, there is every reason to believe that neither its usefulness, nor the support which it had hitherto received from the public, have been in the slightest degree impaired by this department of the

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Dispensary. The other charge, however, is of a kind far less tangible, and from this very circumstance infinitely more dangerous. The undescribed nature of the "many evils" which it attributes—the parade of unknown though "unquestionable authority" with which it is introduced,—the air in short of mystery in which it is wholly involved, are but too well calculated (however they might be intended) to excite the most groundless alarms, to injure at once the character and usefulness of the institution, and to inflict a painful wound on the feelings of those professional gentlemen whose services in this department merited a far other requital. The Managers indeed feel it impossible for them by any tribute of theirs to do justice to the meritorious exertions of these gentlemen, who for the last two years have devoted so great a portion of their time and talents, by day and night, to the care of the helpless mothers of the poor. A regular record of each case, with the particular circumstances attending it, is carefully preserved at the Dispensary; from which it appears that no fewer than 443 women have been delivered at their own houses, and carefully attended during their recovery. Several of these were cases of difficulty, in which the physicians' accoucheurs were called in to the assistance of the ordinary attending midwives. The benefits which the poor must have derived from the attendance of practitioners, of their knowledge and skill, are too obvious to require any explanation. And the gratitude with which these benefits were received by those for whose relief they were intended, may best be learned by an appeal either to themselves, or to the Directors of those institutions which make the female poor

the peculiar object of their care. What "evils," on the other hand, can possibly have arisen from the services of these gentlemen, the Managers are utterly at a loss to conceive; and if there actually were any, it surely was the bounden duty of those who brought forward the allegation, distinctly to point them out, and not to leave every thing open to vague conjecture and surmise. Had the highly respectable individuals whose names have given sanction to this injurious rumour, reflected for a single moment on the consequences which it might occasion, it is doing them no more than justice to believe that they would have paused before they sent forth such a statement to the world. And had they made due investigation, there can be as little doubt they would have discovered nothing in this department to condemn, but much on the contrary to applaud.

In concluding, it is only proper farther to remark, that if the Managers of the other institution be correct in their opinion, that the poor of Edinburgh will "obtain from the institution, under their care, more effectual medical assistance, than is derived from Dispensaries in any other large town in Europe," there can be no ground to apprehend that the New Town Dispensary, which has so much more extensively diffused its benefits, should suffer from a similar comparison. If therefore the old institution merit (as it undoubtedly well merits) "the continued support of a liberal public," the Managers of the new institution have surely no reason whatever to dread that a continuance of that support will be withdrawn from *them*.